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TO CAS VIENTIANE

S E C R E T SENSITIVE EYES ONLY VIA CAS CHANNELS WH29955

DECEMBER 30, 1972

TO: AMBASSADOR GODLEY -- EYES ONLY
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER
REF: YOUR VIENTIANE 630

1. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PROMPT REPORTING OF THE RLG'S INTEREST IN EXPLORING WITH THE DRV IN PARIS A SETTLEMENT IN LAOS PRIOR TO A VIETNAM AGREEMENT.

2. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT A LAO SETTLEMENT SHOULD FOLLOW RPT FOLLOW AN END TO FIGHTING IN VIETNAM. IN THIS RESPECT, YOU WILL NO DOUBT HAVE HEARD BY NOW THAT U.S.-DRV TECHNICAL TALKS WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 2 IN PARIS AND THAT I WILL MEET AGAIN IN PARIS ON JANUARY 8 WITH LE DUC THO AND XUAN THUY. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY INADVISABLE FOR THE LAO TO SOUND OUT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN PARIS REGARDING A SETTLEMENT IN LAOS INDEPENDENT FROM THAT IN VIETNAM.

3. I AM SURE THAT YOU CAN CONVINCE THE LAO THAT THEY SHOULD THEREFORE NOT RPT NOT ATTEMPT TO MAKE CONTACT OR FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE DRV IN PARIS ON THIS MATTER. IF YOU THINK IT DESIRABLE, YOU MIGHT ALSO WISH TO CORRECT THE ASSUMPTIONS OF SISOUK AND KHAMPHAN ABOUT THE TRAIL'S DECLINING IMPORTANCE (IT STILL IS CRITICAL AT LEAST TO CAMBODIA AND TO THE SOUTHERN HALF OF SOUTH VIETNAM) AND ABOUT THE "SECONDARY IMPORTANCE" OF THE LPF'S POLITICAL DEMANDS.

4. WARM REGARDS.

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